Otepka Promotion Puzzles Hill GOP

By Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson

Republican Senators have become increasingly unhappy over the appointment of Otto Otepka, dropped from the State Department for leaking classified information but now promoted to a $36,000 job on the Subversive Activities Control Board.

It now appears that the appointment is a sop more to right-wing Democratic Senators than to Republicans—except for the Senate basso profundo, Everett Dirksen. Sen. Tom Dodd, a Democrat, is Otepka's staunchest supporter. This brings up a situation which puzzles Republicans. President Nixon has gone out of his way to warm up to Senator Dodd despite the fact that Dodd is one of only six men in history to be censured by the Senate.

Dodd was never invited to the White House during the Johnson Administration after his censure. However, Nixon has twice invited him or his family. Once was for dinner in honor of the Dutch prime minister; again, the Dodd children were invited to the masked ball which Tricia Nixon gave.

A new type of Republican is now coming to the fore in the Senate, inclined to be quite independent of the White House on such matters as the ABM, ethical conduct, etc. The Dodd-Otepka-Nixon relationship has shocked them.

Among other things they consider the Otepka appointment a vote of no-confidence in Secretary of State William P. Rogers, a very popular Republican. Rogers had upheld Dean Rusk's decision that Otepka was to be dropped from the State Department.

New Otepka Link

Meanwhile, there is an interesting new development in the Otepka case, now hanging fire in the Senate.

It pertains to J.G. Sourwine, chief counsel for the Senate internal security subcommittee and the man through whom Otepka leaked the State Department documents when both were trying to smear Walt Rostow, the Kennedy-Johnson national security adviser, as a security risk.

Sourwine has been extremely anxious to get Otepka confirmed and was the author of the Senate Judiciary Committee report praising him. It read: "Mr. Otepka states he does not have and has not had any formal or informal connections with the John Birch Society or the Liberty Lobby or Mr. Willis Carto."

It now develops that just the contrary was the fact. Otepka did have connections with these organizations and Sourwine knew the above was not the truth. Despite this, he wrote a report that such able fact-finders on the Judiciary Committee as Sens. Sam Ervin (N.C.) and John McClellen (Ark.) embodied in their report.

The significance of this is threefold:

1. The Birch Society and Liberty Lobby are organizations of the fascist right; while Carto, founder of the Liberty Lobby, is the big wheel in the neo-Nazi movement. He has written that it was a mistake for the United States to have fought Hitler.

2. Otepka, in his new post on the Subversive Activities Control Board, will have the job of passing on right-wing as well as left-wing subversives. In as much as he has described Carto as upholding "the fine traditions of American life," he is prejudiced in advance.

3. The fact that Sourwine, Otepka and some members of the Judiciary Committee are attempting to deceive the Senate indicates a return to the old witch-hunting days when truth was not considered important in making charges of subversion against goverment employees.

3 Weren't Fooled

Three Democratic Senators, Teddy Kennedy (Mass.) Phil Hart (Mich.) and Joe Tydings (Md.), were not taken in by the Sourwine report and voted no. Sen. Charles Mathias, Maryland Republican, expressed public reservations. Sens. Birch Bayh (Ind.) and Quentin Burdick (N.D.), Democrats, knew the real story but knuckled under to right-wing, neo-Nazi pressure. Sen. Marlow Cook, the new Republican from Kentucky, didn't know the real facts.

What many Committee members did not know were the following conclusive links among Sourwine, Otepka and Carto, sparkplug of the neo-Nazis. It was Sourwine who first introduced Otepka to Carto. Out of this meeting came a 28-minute movie, "The Otepka Case," which Carto's Liberty Lobby produced and promoted. Sourwine helped to film some of the sequences.

Despite these connections that Sourwine himself arranged, he denied in his official report any links among Otepka and the John Birch Society, the Liberty Lobby or Carto.

However, when interviewed by Joe Trento of World Wide Features, Sourwine not only expressed his high regard for Liberty Lobby but went further: "Liberty Lobby often requests information about individuals and issues. . . . I do not hesitate to supply anything this dedicated group requests."

© 1969, Bell-McClure Syndicate, Inc.